
A Foundation to Build Upon

The Alliance’s report on health care performance is a Community Checkup for the Puget Sound region. This first report lays a foundation for all of us in King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish and Thurston counties to build upon as a community, working together to improve health care quality. The Community Checkup will be updated and expanded over time to encourage and support continued improvement.

Getting the Basics Right

There are some basic types of health care that doctors and others agree should be provided for certain patients, like checking cholesterol for people with heart disease. The Community Checkup shows that even in these basic areas, there is variation in the region. This is a challenge for all of us—doctors, patients, insurers and even employers that buy health benefits—and we all share a responsibility to be part of the solution. This report gives us a snapshot of how well the community is doing in some basic areas so each of us can take action to increase the use of care that is known to be effective, avoid care that is inappropriate, and support improvement across the community.

Everyone Has a Role

No single doctor, clinic, patient or insurer can fix the health care system *alone*. Everyone has a role in making necessary improvements:

- Doctors and other health care professionals should learn from each other and look at evidence-based approaches to improve the quality of care they provide to their patients
- Health plans and clinics should share ideas on how to make, and support, needed improvements
- Employers and other purchasers should ensure that the benefits they provide or purchase cover the basics of effective health care
- Patients should talk with their doctors about what they need to do to be healthy—then do it!

Everyone Has Room to Improve

The Community Checkup shows that there are opportunities for improvement for *all* health care providers. We all have work to do to make sure patients, especially those with chronic conditions, get the basic care that doctors agree is most effective. While this report gives us a snapshot of the performance of volunteer clinics, it is also important to remember that there is more to “quality health care” than what is measured in this first report.

The Power of Shared Information and Collaboration

Many doctors and other medical, data and community experts were involved in the creation of this report through a collaborative and open process. This first Community Checkup shows results only for clinics that volunteered to be included. We applaud these clinics as leaders in supporting quality improvement. Their participation has been vital to helping the Alliance develop the most comprehensive report of its kind for this region.

For the full report and more about how it was developed, go to www.WACommunityCheckup.org. For more information about the Alliance, go to www.pugetsoundhealthalliance.org.